

WAIVING REQUIREMENT OF
CLAUSE 6(a) OF RULE XIII WITH
RESPECT TO CONSIDERATION OF
CERTAIN RESOLUTIONS

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 465 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 465

Resolved, That the requirement of clause 6(a) of rule XIII for a two-thirds vote to consider a report from the Committee on Rules on the same day it is presented to the House is waived with respect to any resolution reported on or before the legislative day of January 31, 2004, providing for consideration or disposition of any of the following measures:

(1) A bill or joint resolution making continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 2004, any amendment thereto, or any conference report thereon.

(2) A bill or joint resolution making general appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2004, any amendment thereto, or any conference report thereon.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. THORNBERRY). The gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LINDER) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

Mr. Speaker, H. Res. 465 is a rule that waives clause 6(a) of rule XIII with respect to same-day consideration against certain resolutions reported from the Committee on Rules. Specifically, this rule waives the requirement for two-thirds majority vote by the House to consider a rule on the same day that it has been reported by the Committee on Rules.

This rule's waiver applies to any special rule reported by the Committee on Rules on or before the legislative day of January 31, 2004, providing for the consideration of disposition of any of the following:

First, a bill or joint resolution making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 2004, or any amendment thereto, or any conference report thereon; or, second, a bill or joint resolution making general appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2004, any amendment thereto, or any conference report thereon.

Mr. Speaker, the Committee on Rules reported this same-day rule on November 21 in order to provide some flexibility to the House leadership in terms of bringing the consolidated appropriations bill to the floor. On November 25, the text of the conference report on H.R. 2673, the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2004, was printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD for review by House Members. While the rule before the House today permits consideration of a number of appropriations options, the purpose of processing of this rule

today is to expedite the consideration of the remaining fiscal year 2004 appropriations bills in the House. Once this rule is adopted, the House will be able to consider a consolidated appropriations rule and the underlying conference report without delay.

This consolidated bill includes the Foreign Operations bill, the Transportation-Treasury bill, the Agriculture bill, the VA-HUD bill, the Commerce-Justice bill, the District of Columbia bill, and the Labor-HHS bill. I commend the hard work of the gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOUNG) and the Committee on Appropriations for their efforts in crafting this important funding bill. As I stated, the provisions of the consolidated appropriations bill were printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD almost 2 weeks ago, and the passage of the same-day rule will provide for prompt consideration of these important funding bills this afternoon.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the passage of this rule.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Ms. SLAUGHTER asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, Christmas has come early for President Bush and his high-dollar friends, but for millions of American families, it looks like the Grinch will be stealing Christmas. The media has widely reported that the President won victory after victory in negotiations over the details of this omnibus appropriations bill. But any Presidential victory comes at a very high cost.

America's working families and those struggling to stay afloat in the swift currents of unemployment will be stuck with the tab. The unemployment rate was essentially unchanged from October to November and almost 9 million Americans still cannot find work, including 6.2 percent of the New Yorkers who were unemployed.

Across the Nation, the number of Americans filing for the first time for unemployment benefits is up. New claims for unemployment have risen in 47 States and territories. One economist described last Friday's unemployment report as "getting just the Christmas present you want but two sizes too small." The President assured the country that his massive tax cuts would create 300,000 jobs a month. But unfortunately for the millions of men and women looking for work, only 57,000 new jobs were created in November. That is the "two sizes too small." The real effects of the administration's tax giveaways were more money to the wealthiest and a staggering Federal deficit.

Only a few days before the Christmas holiday and the beginning of a new year, unemployment benefits for thousands and thousands of Americans will

run out. After December 20, thousands more will no longer be eligible for an extension of benefits. Today is our last opportunity before that happens to extend the unemployment benefits, to throw a small life preserver to those still caught in the swift currents of steady unemployment flowing through our murky economy.

Just this morning in the Committee on Rules hearing, the chairman of the Committee on Appropriations agreed that unemployment benefits should be extended. We are spending \$87 billion on Iraq, \$150 billion this year, and we should be able to extend the unemployment benefits, especially considering that there is a surplus of unemployment funds.

We need to fight with all our might to protect American jobs, particularly the manufacturing jobs. Since January 2001, the United States has lost 2.4 million manufacturing jobs. We should be exporting American products, not our jobs. The Manufacturing Extension Partnership, MEP, is a nationwide network of centers devoted to providing small and medium size manufacturers with assistance, information, and access to business experts. We should be promoting this program, but instead this bill slashes the budget by 63 percent. It is absurd that we are considering cutting this valuable program while thousands of manufacturing jobs are lost every day. MEP has proven its value in boosting productivity in sales and employment. Slashing this program will cost small manufacturers almost \$2 billion in sales and cost 28,000 workers their employment.

Despite the strong opposition of both elected bodies of Congress, President Bush was successful in killing legislative protections against limitations on overtime pay. Relaxing the overtime pay rules makes it easier for companies to force workers to put in more than 40 hours a week without additional pay. And under the broad rules proposed by this administration, many nurses will be ineligible for overtime pay, and even manual laborers would be classified as executives, which would end their eligibility for overtime pay.

These new regulations could make at least 8 million workers ineligible for the overtime, the money with which many pay their bills and take care of their families. Millions of them rely on that just to scrape by each month. And protecting the worker's right to overtime pay is such an important issue that people from across my district are asking me to oppose this entire bill because it does not include overtime pay protection.

I need to add that the overtime pay protection passed handsomely both Houses of Congress, and we instructed our conferees to keep it in the bill; but mysteriously it disappeared. A man from Tonawanda said last week to us no worker should lose his overtime pay since it is essential to their lives.

This massive bill is yet another example of the disturbing disregard for

women's health. The President's authority to enforce his global gag rule remains unchallenged. Under the Mexico City Policy, the United States Government uses family-planning dollars to impose itself between women and their doctors. The U.S. muzzles health care workers. Clinics are prohibited from mentioning or counseling women about abortion. Doctors and nurses are forced to forfeit the right to provide complete, accurate medical information and advice to their patients.

Mr. Speaker, for the first time in half a century, the Republican Party controls both Houses of Congress and the executive, despite an authoritarian leadership style, inefficiency, and squabbling have produced a job that is less than half complete. The current fiscal year began over 2 months ago, and only three of the 13 measures that pay for functioning of the Federal Government were law by October 1 of fiscal year 2004. And right now only 6 of the 13 bills are law.

With this special rule, we will end the first session of the 108th Congress in a single day of hurried legislative activity.

□ 1130

Rather than wisely investing the body's time in deliberating the details of each of the seven remaining bills, we will spend 1 hour debating the merits of this massive conglomerate report. When substantive debate among Members is silenced, the millions of Americans that we represent are silenced and disenfranchised. Particularly, that is what happens, when one party of the House is excluded from all deliberations. This is not an attribute of a deliberative democracy.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that during the coming second session that comity and genuine bipartisan collaboration will replace arm-twisting and exclusion. I hope that character, decency, virtue, and respect are more than words on a page. I hope that we all will embrace the right of all Members elected here to fully participate in a truly deliberative process and of all the people to be fully represented in their national legislature. A natural result of the decline of deliberative democracy is the decline in the quality of our laws and the decline of public support for them and the decline of the standard of living in the United States. I urge my colleagues to vote against the previous question.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4½ minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN).

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to this martial law rule. This rule will allow us to consider a seriously flawed omnibus appropriations bill and nothing else.

After today, the House will not come back to work for legislative business until January 20. The time between

now and January 20 that Congress will be out of session might not seem that important to some, but for hundreds of thousands of Americans it will be a terrible time indeed; that is because their Federal unemployment assistance is due to expire.

Mr. Speaker, even with the modest job gains made over the past few months, the U.S. economy has 2.4 million fewer jobs today compared to 2½ years ago. There are more than 2 million workers who have been unemployed for more than 6 months; and to make a bad situation worse, over 400,000 jobless Americans will not be eligible for unemployment compensation after the first of the year.

Americans continue to be unemployed at alarmingly high rates. Just last week, we saw job numbers that fell well below expectations. And the percentage of Americans exhausting their unemployment benefits without finding a job has reached its highest level on record.

Mr. Speaker, jobless Americans need help and they need it now. But while unemployed Americans continue to struggle to find work, this Republican-controlled Congress is preparing to leave town for the year. Like last year, Members of Congress will be free to go home to their families and constituents. Like last year, Members will have a nice holiday. And just like last year, the Republican-controlled Congress is letting unemployment insurance expire during the Christmas season. For hundreds of thousands of Americans, this Republican Congress will be their Grinch who stole Christmas. And I have little hope that Congress's heart will grow any time soon; that is, unless we act today.

The facts are clear. It is clear we will not be back in session until late January; and it is clear that during that time, hundreds of thousands of jobless Americans will lose their unemployment insurance. We should not turn our backs on these people and their families in our rush to adjourn.

Now, I am sure that there is a bipartisan consensus to extend unemployment benefits. I am sure that if we brought up a bill to do that, a majority would support it; and if not, we could just hold the vote open for 3 hours or 4 hours until a majority appeared. That seems to be the new precedent around here. But the leadership does not want it. And in today's House of Representatives, what the leadership wants, the leadership gets. To heck with democracy.

Unemployed Americans deserve better than this.

Mr. Speaker, since this may be our last opportunity to speak this year, let me conclude with a few words about the process that has dominated during this session.

I have worked in this House for 20 years, both as a staffer and as a Member. Never have I seen so much disregard for the rules, the traditions, and the well-being of this House. We have

seen huge pieces of legislation come to this floor for consideration without allowing Members the time to read what they are voting on. We have seen conference reports appear without a conference committee ever having met. We have seen conference committees that meet, but shut Democrats out. We have seen conference reports come to the floor, like the one that we are going to deal with today, that undo the work of the both the full House and Senate. These bills drop provisions that were supported by both bodies and add things that we never voted on. And we have seen rollcall votes held open for hours and hours until the leadership gets the result they want by any means necessary.

I am honored to hold the seat on the Committee on Rules that my old boss, Joe Moakley, had; and it saddens me that the Committee on Rules has become a place not to manage debate, but to stifle it. It has been used as a weapon against Members of both parties. I have been approached many times by Republican colleagues expressing their sympathy and their outrage with the action of their Republican leadership, and I appreciate their kind words. But I say to my friends on the other side, I do not need your sympathy. I need your vote.

Until Members on the other side stand up to their leadership, stand up for democracy in this House, stand up for the precedents and the traditions of this body, things will get worse, not better. This House is broken. And I urge my colleagues to think long and hard during this holiday season about how we can fix it.

Vote no on the previous question.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. HOOLEY).

Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the martial law rule.

In Oregon, the recession much earlier than the rest of the country. My State has had the dubious distinction of having the highest rate of unemployment in the country for much of the last 3 years. During that time, Oregon has lost 57,000 jobs, a lot of jobs from a State like mine.

Unemployment benefits are intended as a safety net to carry people from one job to the next. They do not provide 100 percent of a person's previous salary, and they require sacrifice to make it work, but the benefits are absolutely vital for families to make ends meet. And not only do those benefits provide a level of security to families, unemployment benefits are also a stimulus to our local economies. When you take spending power from people, businesses hurt. Each dollar spent on unemployment benefits results in boosting the economy by \$1.73. But unless Congress takes action today, almost 40,000 Oregonians will lose their unemployment benefits in the first half

of next year. Benefits that are needed to pay their rent, pay their mortgage, pay for food, pay utility bills.

Eleven thousand Oregonians exhausted their benefits last month and that number is going to continue to grow unless Congress acts today. The Federal Government Unemployment Trust Funds have a balance of roughly \$20 billion, more than enough to continue and improve the extended benefits program. These funds were paid into that unemployment compensation system just for the purpose of helping dislocated workers during difficult economic times. This is money that is there. This is the only thing that money can be used for. It does not add to the debt. This is something we need to do.

I urge my colleagues in joining me to defeat the previous question on the martial law rule for the omnibus spending bill so we can bring up an unemployment extension bill.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3½ minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN).

(Mr. LEVIN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, this is not a happy moment. This is not a happy moment. We are forced to come up here and ask that the previous question be defeated so that we can give to people who are unemployed, who need unemployment comp, who are looking for work, an additional 13 weeks. And all we get from the Republican side is reserving the balance of their time.

There are 9 million unemployed in this country; and here is what is going to happen: December 20, if you are laid off, or I should say if you are drawing benefits, you can continue to receive your extended benefits. But, if you exhaust your benefits on December 21, you are out in the cold. That is the holiday message from the majority in this House. It is unconscionable. All kinds of excuses.

The gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY) has said, Every indicator is better than in 1993. But the job picture is entirely worse. Job creation is entirely, dramatically less.

Then I heard: Leave it to the Senate. They are not going to act.

Where are my colleagues from Michigan on the Republican side? Because of a bipartisan action in Lansing, people who needed it could draw up to 65 weeks; and now, someone laid off on December 21, or I should say who is exhausting their benefits, is out in the cold. Not one more week.

We should not have to be coming here, Mr. Speaker. Times are tough. I talked to building trade leaders an hour ago. Unemployment is going up in the building trades in Michigan and in lots of other places, and there is nothing but a cold shoulder from the leadership of this House. And I say to the Speaker, whom it is now being said

about, that he can patrol this floor and get the votes, where is your leadership?

We should not have to be here today, the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL), myself and others. This should be a bipartisan effort, and I hope in the next 24, no, it is not 24, it is 5 or 6 hours, that you, on the Republican side, will keep faith with the American people, those who are working and those who are not working through no fault of their own. Do not reserve your time. Come here with a bill.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO).

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, unemployed Americans are about to get their annual Christmas gift from the Republican majority, and that is the end of their unemployment benefits.

This is not the first time this happened. Last year, Congress went home without extending unemployment benefits for those who, through no fault of their own, cannot find a job and have exhausted their benefits.

Now they say, well, we just cannot afford it. They can afford hundreds of billions of dollars of other things in this bill, foreign aid other things, much of it borrowed, but they cannot find the money for unemployed Americans. Well, that is actually a lie because there is \$20 billion in the unemployment trust fund.

They do not even have to borrow the money to help unemployed Americans like they are going to borrow to help many of the special interests. All they have to do is agree to spend some of the taxes paid and on deposit to help unemployed Americans, paid by workers, paid by employers. That is why that money is there.

Every week, 400 Oregonians exhaust their benefits in this jobless recovery. Nationwide, tens of thousands of Americans are losing their unemployment benefits. They cannot find work through no fault of their own. They want to work. They want to work, but they cannot find a job. Their job has exported to China or to Mexico or from my district, some of them even to Canada. They cannot find a decent paying job. And now what is the Republican majority going to do? They are going to go home without extending unemployment benefits for these people. Many will lose the benefits Christmas week or New Year's week or in the month following. They may not be able to make the payments on their house. They are not going to be able to help their kids get the things they need to go to school, to feed their family, to pay their electric bills. These are basics.

We cannot find that money. We have the money. It is sitting in the bank. All we have to do is agree to spend it.

We have to stop pretending that everything is good with the economy, that America's just booming ahead

again. We have what is called "a jobless recovery" in this country, and those are real people who do not have jobs. They are real people in my district. And Congress could do something real for them today. It is just choosing not to. It will help the special interests but not working Americans.

□ 1145

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL).

(Mr. RANGEL asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RANGEL. My colleagues, I do not know why the majority is reserving their time. Some pretty rough accusations have been made against them as a party. It would just seem to me that there should be enough sensitivity if not to respond to us then at least to respond to those 9 million people who are without work and without hope for the future.

I can understand the majority in trying to eliminate all taxes for corporations and the rich. I can understand them trying to dismantle the Social Security System and the Medicare system. These are things they have dedicated themselves to doing and can be described as being Republican and Democratic positions. But how can someone out of work be the victim of partisanship? How can they determine whether they are Republican or Democrat? How can they benefit when a kid has to be withdrawn from school because of their parents' failure to pay their tuition, or their mortgage is forced to be foreclosed on?

It seems to me that at this time of the year we can at least join ranks to take care of those people who want to work each and every day. If we can spend \$1 billion a week rebuilding Baghdad, we should at least give some token of appreciation for those people who have worked hard to build this Nation, to make her as strong as she is by giving to them out of their own trust funds that this Congress established to protect them; that we have the compassion, no, not the compassion, we have the responsibility to respond to their needs.

Sometimes I am so proud to be a Member of this body, but it is becoming increasingly more difficult to go to town hall meetings and to not ask why we tolerate the Republicans doing these things. Why does this institution, this great institution that we inherited, allow such pain and suffering to go to the least among us? It is wrong.

We should vote "no" on the previous question, and I hope we hear sometime this morning from the majority.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY).

(Ms. WOOLSEY asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I too am in opposition to this martial law rule because it fails to bring attention to the hardworking families that are struggling every day in this Nation to meet their needs and to take care of their children. The economy is letting them down. The economy continues to suffer. The job market is weak. These families are why we must absolutely extend the unemployment benefits and why we must do it now. Not later, but now.

Mr. Speaker, families must have the means to be healthy, they must be safe when their jobs are no longer secure, and that is why we must extend these unemployment benefits before we adjourn Congress this year, before we leave here for our holidays. We are highly paid. We are employed. Yet we are going to leave and enjoy our holidays, and it will be absolutely irresponsible if we do not extend the unemployment benefits.

If it is not irresponsible, Mr. Speaker, it is certainly hardhearted, because we need 26 weeks' more extension for those who have already lost their jobs or who are going to lose their jobs or for those who have unemployment benefits that have lapsed. If we do not give unemployed workers the help they need today, an estimated 500,000 or 900,000, over half a million of the Nation's jobless, will be without benefits by the time we return from our holidays in January; holidays that we have been able to enjoy because we are highly paid and we are employed, until at least November of every other year.

Why are we not taking care of those who do not have the benefits that we have? I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the extension of benefits and vote against the martial law rule.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. ANDREWS).

(Mr. ANDREWS asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding me this time. In 1971, when I was 14 years old, in the spring of that year, one day my father came home from work from the shipyard at which he had worked for nearly 40 years and he brought home with him that day a layoff notice from the shipyard because we were no longer making enough money building the ships. That was a summer where he applied for a lot of jobs. He had to make, as I recall, a weekly visit to the unemployment office to pick up his check; and his benefits ran out in the fall of 1971.

I was not quite old enough to understand what that meant, but I was old enough to remember the stress and anxiety my mother and father felt that fall; and I was also old enough to remember that somehow or another there was some good news that came that fall because the unemployment

checks that my dad was picking up once a week were going to keep going for a while, to get us through the holiday season that year in 1971. He hung in there. He eventually got a part-time job and worked every day for the rest of his life, until he died in 1985 at the age of 75 years old. Government reached out and helped us that holiday season 32 years ago.

Mr. Speaker, I know there are 1.3 million American families who feel today like we felt that day 32 years ago, not knowing whether the money was going to be there for us to have any kind of holiday at all, much less the money to pay our rent for the next month, to pay for our heat for the next month to survive on into the next year.

There was money around here to pay for a solar heating experiment for a Hooters restaurant down South, there was plenty of money, necessary money in my opinion, to rebuild the wreckage of postwar Baghdad, there is certainly enough money for the 1.3 million American families who have already exhausted their unemployment benefits.

Defeat the previous question. Let us bring this issue to the floor.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentleman from Washington State (Mr. MCDERMOTT).

(Mr. MCDERMOTT asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Well, Merry Christmas, Mr. Speaker. We are here, and we are going to have a party down at the White House tonight, and everybody is going to be full of happiness and *gemütlichkeit*, but the workers of this country are not going to get anything done by the Republican legislature.

The leadership of the Republican Congress is ignoring the need to extend benefits this year, just like they did last year. We will be back in January; and there will be all this clamor about, oh, we have to do something about unemployment. We know it now. We not only need to extend these benefits, but we need to fix a quirk in the law that keeps people in Washington State from even getting it if we would extend it.

Now, the administration likes to trumpet, oh, the stock market is up and there are a few jobs here and there, but this economic recovery is a mile wide and an inch deep. Two out of every three people will not find a job. That is the statistic out of the Department of Labor in the Bush administration. We know there are no jobs out there. We say, well, try harder. Go work harder. Walk around.

Mr. Speaker, no matter how dedicated you are, how willing you are to accept a job, if there is no chance, it sounds to me like, you know, it is like being on the Titanic and looking down to see how many life boats there are and saying, well, I guess I am not get-

ting into one, but I guess maybe the ship will make it.

Washington State remains one of the hardest hit States in the Nation, despite being a diverse economy that is a model and a microcosm of America. Too many people are falling through the cracks, and the leadership of the Republican Party does not care. They want martial law in here in this Congress. They would be willing to put martial law out on the streets if the unemployed in this country rose up.

For every person we know who is unemployed, there are many more who have been given up, dropped out of sight and out of reach. Washington citizens from all walks of life look to us for leadership, look to us for a helping hand in time of hardship. They deserve it, and for the good of America we cannot turn our backs on our own people.

Now, we can go have that party down at the White House, and there will be bands playing and violins, and lots of drinks and good food; but it is sort of like Old England. It is Scrooge's business. Let us have a party, but we will not worry about the people out on the streets.

Vote against the previous question and make this leadership bring up unemployment.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

We are about to adjourn sine die and close the first session of the 108th Congress with no more legislative business until January 20th of next year. And just like last year at this time, we are again callously turning our backs on millions of unemployed Americans whose Federal unemployment benefits are set to expire shortly after Christmas.

It is very interesting how the Republican leadership can find billions of dollars to make their rich friends even richer, but cannot find it in their hearts to help jobless workers through this rough time with money that is already there for them. They can find \$87 billion to fund the war in Iraq, but nothing for those here without jobs.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to call for a "no" vote to defeat the previous question on this rule so we can try to do something to help the unemployed American workers. If the previous question is defeated, I will offer an amendment so we can immediately take up legislation to extend the expiring Federal unemployment benefits. And I want to state again: the money is there. It does not have to be borrowed. It has been paid in. It simply requires Federal action to allow the States to expend it.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation will continue the extended unemployment benefits program for the first 6 months of next year. The bill would also increase to 26 weeks the amount of benefits provided under that program, which is up from 13 weeks. This would provide new help to the 1.4 million workers who have already exhausted

their extended benefits and have yet to find work.

This measure is identical to the text of H.R. 3244, the Rangel-Cardin unemployment extension, and also contains the text of H.R. 3554, authored by the gentleman from Washington (Mr. McDERMOTT), which would fix a flaw in the current law that prevents those States with exceptionally high long-term unemployment rates from continuing to receive extra benefits.

There is so much talk today about our economy and claims that things are looking good. However, new jobs are not forthcoming at this time and do not appear to be coming anytime soon. Americans continue to be unemployed at alarmingly high rates. The percentage of Americans exhausting their unemployment benefits without finding a job has reached the highest level on record. More than 2 million workers have been unemployed for more than 6 months. Jobs are disappearing every day with no relief in sight. These Americans need relief, and they need it immediately.

If we do not fix this today, over 400,000 jobless Americans will not be eligible for unemployment compensation after the first of the year. More than 2 million more will lose the benefits in the first 6 months of next year. And, Mr. Speaker, the House will probably adjourn sine die today or later this week, so this is the only opportunity we have to help unemployed Americans this year. Let us not abandon them today.

I want to emphasize that voting against the previous question will not stop the omnibus appropriations conference report from coming to the floor today.

Voting "no" on the previous question will still allow that bill to be considered. But a "no" vote will allow the House to vote on legislation that will help our Nation's unemployed workers.

However, a "yes" vote on the previous question you will stop any opportunity for this House to extend desperately needed unemployment assistance to hundreds of thousands of our constituents and their families. Do you really want to go home and tell these people that you failed to do your job and failed to help them in their time of need?

Make no mistake, this vote will give the House the opportunity to vote today to extend Federal unemployment benefits and to give relief to those hardest hit by our Nation's grim employment situation. I urge a "no" vote on the previous question.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the amendment be printed in the RECORD immediately before the vote on the previous question.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am here today to echo the sentiment of my Democratic colleagues about where our priorities are. As Congress comes to a close for 2003, I want to emphasize the needs of the middle class, of the unemployed and of the families struggling to make ends meet.

I am here to vote "no" on the Previous Question on both the Martial Law Rule and the Rule for the Omnibus Appropriations bill. I am doing this to allow the House to consider legislation that would continue to extend unemployment benefits through the first six months of next year.

By voting no, we can consider H.R. 3568, a bill that would also increase to 26 weeks the amount of benefits provided under that program—up from 13 weeks—and help the 1.4 million workers who have already exhausted their extended benefits.

Already this year, the Bush Administration has cut education spending, giving the rich more tax breaks, and taken away the child tax credit for the middle class. We need to be taking steps to change this selfish economic policy and focus on creating jobs and incentives to employ more people and assist those during the transition.

Right now we know that job creation will need to be far greater, more sustained and more robust to start to undo the damage of the recession created by the Bush Administration. Already, President Bush is on track to have the worst job creation record of any modern President. With a current unemployment rate of 5.9 percent, it is a 44 percent increase than the rate when President Bush took office in January 2001. This means 2.7 million more Americans are without a job because of our irresponsible economic practices.

Extending unemployment benefits is one of the first steps to correcting the administration's poor economic planning. Economists have estimated that each dollar of unemployment benefits leads to \$1.75 in economic growth.

Last year, the Republicans went home for the holidays and left 800,000 jobless Americans fearing for their terminated benefits. This year, we have two million Americans out of work for over six months, and benefits will expire for 90,000 workers every week unless we do something about this now.

This is something we must do for our constituents who are struggling to make ends meet because of circumstances that are out of their control. From my own district in Houston, I have received over 150 pleading requests to not adjourn without passing the unemployment benefit extension. This Administration needs to come up with economic policies that will create jobs, and in the interim they must provide support to unemployed workers by immediately extending Federal unemployment benefits. We need to take better care of our working families and make this a priority.

□ 1200

The text of the material previously referred to by Ms. SLAUGHTER is as follows:

PREVIOUS QUESTION FOR H. RES. 465—RULE ON WAIVING 2/3RDS FOR OMNIBUS/C/R AND/OR APPROPRIATIONS MEASURES

At the end of the resolution add the following new section:

SEC. 2. Immediately after disposition of this resolution, it shall be in order without intervention of any point of order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 3568) to provide extended unemployment benefits to displaced workers, and to make other improvements in the unemployment insurance system. The bill shall be considered as read for amendment. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill to final passage without intervening motion except: (1)

one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the Chairman and ranking Minority Member of the Committee on Ways and Means; and (2) one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I urge Members to support the previous question and the rule, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. THORNBERRY). The question is on ordering the previous question.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Evidently a quorum is not present.

The Sergeant at Arms will notify absent Members.

Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, the Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the minimum time for electronic voting, if ordered, on the question of adoption of the resolution.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 211, nays 179, not voting 44, as follows:

[Roll No. 672]

YEAS—211

Akin	Ehlers	Kline
Baker	Emerson	Knollenberg
Ballenger	English	Kolbe
Barrett (SC)	Everett	LaHood
Bartlett (MD)	Feeney	Latham
Barton (TX)	Flake	LaTourette
Bass	Foley	Leach
Beauprez	Forbes	Lewis (CA)
Bereuter	Fossella	Lewis (KY)
Biggart	Franks (AZ)	Linder
Bilirakis	Frelinghuysen	LoBiondo
Bishop (UT)	Garrett (NJ)	Lucas (OK)
Blackburn	Gerlach	Manzullo
Blunt	Gibbons	McCotter
Boehlert	Gilchrest	McCrery
Boehner	Gillmor	McHugh
Bonilla	Gingrey	McInnis
Bonner	Goode	McKeon
Bono	Gordon	Mica
Boozman	Goss	Miller (MI)
Bradley (NH)	Granger	Miller, Gary
Brady (TX)	Graves	Moran (KS)
Brown (SC)	Green (WI)	Murphy
Brown-Waite,	Greenwood	Musgrave
Ginny	Gutknecht	Myrick
Burgess	Harris	Nethercutt
Burns	Hart	Neugebauer
Buyer	Hastings (WA)	Ney
Calvert	Hayes	Northup
Camp	Hayworth	Norwood
Cannon	Hefley	Nunes
Capito	Hensarling	Nussle
Carter	Herger	Osborne
Castle	Hobson	Ose
Chabot	Hoekstra	Otter
Chocola	Hostettler	Oxley
Coble	Houghton	Paul
Cole	Hulshof	Pearce
Collins	Hunter	Pence
Cox	Hyde	Peterson (PA)
Crane	Isakson	Petri
Crenshaw	Issa	Pickering
Culberson	Istook	Pitts
Cunningham	Jenkins	Platts
Davis, Jo Ann	Johnson (IL)	Pombo
Davis, Tom	Johnson, Sam	Porter
DeLay	Jones (NC)	Portman
DeMint	Keller	Pryce (OH)
Diaz-Balart, L.	Kelly	Putnam
Diaz-Balart, M.	Kennedy (MN)	Quinn
Doolittle	King (IA)	Radanovich
Dreier	King (NY)	Ramstad
Duncan	Kingston	Rehberg
Dunn	Kirk	Renzi

Reynolds
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Ryan (WI)
Ryun (KS)
Saxton
Schrock
Sensenbrenner
Shadegg
Shaw
Shays
Sherwood
Shimkus
Shuster

NAYS—179

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Alexander
Allen
Andrews
Baca
Baird
Baldwin
Ballance
Becerra
Bell
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Boswell
Boucher
Boyd
Brady (PA)
Brown (OH)
Brown, Corrine
Capps
Carson (IN)
Case
Clay
Clyburn
Conyers
Cooper
Costello
Cramer
Crowley
Cummins
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (FL)
Davis (IL)
Davis (TN)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Deutsch
Dicks
Dingell
Dooley (CA)
Doyle
Edwards
Emanuel
Eshoo
Etheridge
Evans
Farr
Ford
Frank (MA)
Frost
Gonzalez
Green (TX)
Grijalva
Gutierrez

NOT VOTING—44

Aderholt
Bachus
Burr
Burton (IN)
Cantor
Capuano
Cardin
Cardoza
Carson (OK)
Cubin
Deal (GA)
Doggett
Engel
Fattah
Ferguson

Simmons
Simpson
Smith (MI)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Souder
Stearns
Sullivan
Sweeney
Tancredo
Tauzin
Taylor (NC)
Terry
Thomas
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi

Toomey
Turner (OH)
Upton
Vitter
Walden (OR)
Walsh
Wamp
Weldon (FL)
Weldon (PA)
Weller
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Young (FL)

Oberstar
Obey
Oliver
Ortiz
Owens
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Pelosi
Peterson (MN)
Pomeroy
Price (NC)
Rahall
Reyes
Rodriguez
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Sabo
Sanchez, Linda
T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sanders
Sandlin
Schakowsky
Schiff
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Sherman
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Solis
Spratt
Stark
Stenholm
Strickland
Stupak
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor (MS)
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Towns
Turner (TX)
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Van Hollen
Velazquez
Visclosky
Watson
Watt
Weiner
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. THORNBERRY)(during the vote). Members are reminded that 2 minutes remain in this vote.

□ 1221

Messrs. WYNN, PASCRELL and CRAMER changed their vote from “yea” to “nay.”

Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland changed his vote from “nay” to “yea.”

So the previous question was ordered. The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated for:

Mr. FERGUSON. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 672, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted “yea.”

Stated against:

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 672, due to urgent constituent support commitments in my congressional district, I missed the vote. Had I been present, I would have voted “nay.”

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 672, I missed due to unavoidable circumstances. Had I been present, I would have voted “nay.”

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 212, noes 182, not voting 40, as follows:

[Roll No. 673]

AYES—212

Aderholt
Akin
Baker
Ballenger
Barrett (SC)
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Bass
Beauprez
Bereuter
Biggart
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blunt
Boehlert
Boehner
Bonilla
Bonner
Bono
Boozman
Bradley (NH)
Brady (TX)
Brown (SC)
Brown-Waite,
Ginny
Burgess
Burns
Calvert
Cannon
Capito
Carter
Castle
Chabot
Chocola
Coble
Cole
Collins
Cox
Crane
Crenshaw

Culberson
Cunningham
Davis, Jo Ann
Davis, Tom
DeLay
DeMint
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Doolittle
Dreier
Duncan
Dunn
Ehlers
English
Everett
Feeney
Ferguson
Flake
Foley
Forbes
Fossella
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Gibbons
Gilchrest
Gillmor
Gingrey
Goode
Goss
Granger
Graves
Green (WI)
Greenwood
Gutknecht
Hall
Harris
Hart
Hastings (WA)
Hayes

Hayworth
Hefley
Hensarling
Hobson
Hoekstra
Hostettler
Houghton
Hulshof
Hunter
Hyde
Isakson
Issa
Istook
Jenkins
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Keller
Kelly
Kennedy (MN)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kirk
Kline
Knollenberg
Kolbe
LaHood
Latham
LaTourette
Leach
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
LoBiondo
Lucas (OK)
Manzullo
McCotter
McCrery
McHugh
McInnis

McKeon
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Moran (KS)
Murphy
Musgrave
Myrick
Nethercutt
Neugebauer
Ney
Northup
Norwood
Nunes
Nussle
Osborne
Ose
Otter
Oxley
Paul
Pearce
Pence
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Pombo
Porter

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Alexander
Allen
Andrews
Baca
Baird
Baldwin
Ballance
Becerra
Bell
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Boswell
Boucher
Boyd
Brady (PA)
Brown (OH)
Brown, Corrine
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carson (IN)
Case
Clay
Clyburn
Conyers
Cooper
Costello
Cramer
Crowley
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (FL)
Davis (IL)
Davis (TN)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Deutsch
Dicks
Dingell
Dooley (CA)
Doyle
Edwards
Emanuel
Eshoo
Etheridge
Evans
Farr
Fattah
Ford
Frank (MA)
Frost
Gonzalez
Gordon

Bachus
Burr
Burton (IN)

Portman
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Quinn
Radanovich
Ramstad
Rehberg
Renzi
Reynolds
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Royce
Ryan (WI)
Ryun (KS)
Saxton
Schrock
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shadegg
Shaw
Shays
Sherwood
Shimkus
Shuster
Simmons
Simpson
Smith (MI)

NOES—182

Green (TX)
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Harman
Hill
Hinojosa
Hoeffel
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley (OR)
Hoyer
Inslee
Israel
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee
(TX)
Jefferson
John
Jones (OH)
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kennedy (RI)
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind
Klecza
Kucinich
Lampson
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
Lofgren
Lowey
Lucas (KY)
Majette
Maloney
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (MO)
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McIntyre
McNulty
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Menendez
Michaud
Millender-
McDonald
Miller (NC)
Mollohan
Moore
Moran (VA)
Murtha
Napolitano

NOT VOTING—40

Buyer
Camp
Cantor

Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Souder
Stearns
Sullivan
Sweeney
Tancredo
Tauzin
Taylor (NC)
Terry
Thomas
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Toomey
Turner (OH)
Upton
Vitter
Walden (OR)
Walsh
Wamp
Weldon (FL)
Weldon (PA)
Weller
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Young (FL)

Neal (MA)
Oberstar
Obey
Oliver
Ortiz
Owens
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Pelosi
Peterson (MN)
Pomeroy
Price (NC)
Rahall
Reyes
Rodriguez
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Sabo
Sanchez, Linda
T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sanders
Sandlin
Schakowsky
Schiff
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Sherman
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Solis
Spratt
Stark
Stenholm
Strickland
Stupak
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor (MS)
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Towns
Turner (TX)
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Van Hollen
Velazquez
Visclosky
Watson
Watt
Weiner
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn

Deal (GA)	Hinchey	Rangel
Doggett	Janklow	Regula
Emerson	Johnson (CT)	Rush
Engel	Johnson, E. B.	Scott (GA)
Filner	Lantos	Tierney
Fletcher	Larson (CT)	Waters
Galleghy	Lynch	Waxman
Gephardt	Markey	Wexler
Goodlatte	Meehan	Young (AK)
Hastings (FL)	Miller, George	
Herger	Nadler	

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). Members are reminded that 2 minutes remain in this vote.

□ 1230

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated against:

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 673, due to urgent constituent support commitments in my congressional district, I missed the vote. Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I would like to submit this statement for the RECORD and regret that I was unavoidably detained on Monday, December 8, 2003, during rollcall vote Nos. 672 and 673 on H. Res. 493, a resolution waiving a requirement of clause 6(a) of rule XIII with respect to consideration of certain resolutions reported from the Committee on Rules. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay" on rollcall vote No. 672 and "nay" on rollcall vote No. 673.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, earlier today I was unavoidably detained and missed two recorded votes on the House floor.

I ask unanimous consent that my statement appear in the RECORD that had I not been unavoidably detained earlier this morning, I would have voted "no" on rollcall vote No. 672 (Previous Question) and "no" on rollcall vote No. 673 (Passage of Martial Law Rule).

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Mr. Williams, one of his secretaries.

HONORING CONGRESSMAN JOE SKEEN

(Mrs. WILSON of New Mexico asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. WILSON of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, it is my sad duty to inform my colleagues and Members of this House that last evening Congressman Joe Skeen of New Mexico passed away from complications associated with Parkinson's disease. His funeral will be held on Thursday, December 12, at 2 p.m. in Roswell, New Mexico. I know

that many Members of this House were close personal friends of Joe, enjoyed his company and his sense of humor and his deep commitment to this country. After the final business of today, there will be a 1-hour special order on the House floor to allow Members to honor their friend.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, will the gentlewoman yield?

Mrs. WILSON of New Mexico. I yield to the gentleman from Maryland.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for rising and for yielding as well. I had not heard of Joe's passing.

When I came to the Congress of the United States in 1981, my office was two doors from Joe Skeen's. As we all do, we had the opportunity to walk down the fifth floor corridor of the Longworth building to vote and we talk and get to know one another. And Suzanne, his chief of staff, and I became good friends, and Joe became an extraordinarily good friend. Joe chaired a subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations.

Mr. Speaker, Joe Skeen was one of those Members who added greatly to the comity of this body. He had deep convictions, but he also had a deep respect for those with whom he served. Joe Skeen will be missed by New Mexico, by his family, but he will also be missed by this House and by the American people. At a time when the relations between the parties is not what really it ought to be in this House, and perhaps in this country, Joe Skeen was one of those who demonstrated that differences on policy did not need to be accompanied by enmity between the Members of this House. He will be sorely missed. And I thank the gentlewoman for giving me this opportunity to say how loved Joe Skeen was by all who knew him.

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Speaker, will the gentlewoman yield?

Mrs. WILSON of New Mexico. I yield to the gentleman from Washington.

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Speaker, I would just like to make a comment. I served with Joe Skeen on the Interior Subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations. He was our chairman, did an outstanding job. We worked together on a very bipartisan basis. And even though he was struggling somewhat, he was there every day, worked hard, did a great job on the Interior bill. Every member of the committee on both sides of the aisle, all the staff, loved Joe Skeen because he was such a decent warm human being, and he will be missed. But his work will be remembered, and he did a lot of great things for our country as chairman of the Interior Subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations. We will miss Joe Skeen.

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, will the gentlewoman yield?

Mrs. WILSON of New Mexico. I yield to the gentleman from New Mexico.

MR. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, the tenor here of the Mem-

bers, I think, is very appropriate to the man that Joe Skeen was. And I had the opportunity, as the gentlewoman knows, to serve with him here for the 5 years that he was here, and I always felt that he was a good friend. He was very serious about New Mexico. And whenever I had any question about New Mexico issues or any other issues, for that matter, he was somebody that I could go to the other side of the aisle and sit down with and talk with and visit with. So it is with great sadness, I think, that all New Mexicans feel his passing away. And I think all Members of Congress that have served here with him know that he was of the old school. He cared very much about bipartisanship. He cared about this institution. He was somebody that, I think many years hence, we will remember him and regret his passing.

So I thank the gentlewoman for yielding and look forward to participating with her later in the day in the special order.

Mrs. WILSON of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from New Mexico for his comments. Again, there will be an opportunity for Members to remember Joe and his contributions to this House and to this Nation later on this afternoon.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 1078

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to have my name removed as a cosponsor of H.R. 1078.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. THORNBERRY). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida? There was no objection.

WAIVING POINTS OF ORDER AGAINST CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2673, CONSOLIDATED APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2004

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 473 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 473

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 2673) making appropriations for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2004, and for other purposes. All points of order against the conference report and against its consideration are waived. The conference report shall be considered as read.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. FROST), pending which I yield myself